

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of drying metallic waste likely to catch fire and/or explode, said dried waste being for compacting, the method comprising:

- loading said waste into a compacting canister; said canister ~~of cylindrical or prismatic shape~~ having one or more axial walls, a bottom, and a cover, and being fitted with means ~~respectively~~ for enabling a drying inert gas to be introduced into said canister and means for enabling said drying inert gas to be evacuated from said canister so as to dry said waste ~~loading~~ loaded in said canister, said means for ~~introducing~~ enabling said drying inert gas to be introduced and said means for enabling evacuating said drying inert gas to be evacuated being arranged relative to each other in such a manner that said drying inert gas introduced into the said canister flows significantly through said waste prior to being evacuated from the said canister, said canister being closed by its cover after being loaded;

- ~~moving said~~ loaded canister, ~~prior to said loading, having previously been positioned empty in the~~ a cavity of a moving enclosure, said cavity being formed in the body of said moving enclosure, and being open on top, ~~or otherwise;~~ and then

- ~~said loaded canister closed by its cover is positioned in the cavity of a moving enclosure, said cavity being provided in the body of said moving enclosure and being open on top;~~

then:

- docking said moving enclosure ~~loaded with said~~ having said waste-loaded canister ~~itself loaded with said waste~~ therein to a stationary docking station; said stationary docking station

- + presenting a configuration adapted to confine said canister in a hermetically closed volume once said moving enclosure has docked; and

+ being fitted with means ~~respectively~~ for delivering said drying gas into said canister and means for evacuating said drying gas from said canister; said means for delivering said drying gas into said canister of said docking station being suitable ~~respectively~~ for co-operating with ~~the said~~ means for ~~introducing and evacuating~~ enabling said drying gas ~~that are fitted to be introduced into~~ said canister, either directly ~~and or~~ and/or via means for circulating said gas formed in the body of said moving enclosure, said means for evacuating said drying gas from said canister in said docking station being suitable for co-operating with said means in said canister for enabling said drying inert gas to be evacuated from said canister, either directly and/or via means for circulating said gas formed in the body of said moving enclosure; and

- ~~setting circulating~~ said drying inert gas ~~into circulation~~ through said canister confined in said docked moving enclosure.

2. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein, at least one of said means for ~~introducing or delivering~~ and said means for evacuating, ~~advantageously for introducing,~~ said drying inert gas, ~~the suitable means of the in said~~ docking station co-operate with ~~the suitable~~ its respective enabling means fitted to ~~the said~~ bottom of said canister via means for circulating said gas arranged in the body of said moving enclosure.

3. (original) The method according to claim 2, wherein said drying inert gas is introduced into said canister via a check valve fitted to the bottom of said canister.

4. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein, at least one of said means for ~~introducing or delivering~~ said drying inert gas and said means for evacuating, ~~advantageously evacuating,~~ said drying inert gas, ~~the suitable means of the in said~~ docking station co-operate directly with ~~the suitable~~ its respective enabling means fitted to ~~the said~~ cover of said canister.

5. (original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said drying inert gas is evacuated under conditions which limit the entrainment of dust.

6. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein, in parallel with ~~setting circulating~~ said drying inert gas ~~into circulation~~, the method includes sweeping the said fraction of the hermetically closed volume that is not occupied by said canister with an inert gas delivered by suitable means from said stationary docking station either directly or via means for circulating said inert gas and formed in the body of said moving enclosure, ~~and; said inert gas being~~ evacuated together with said drying inert gas by the evacuation means of said docking station directly or via means for setting circulating said inert gas ~~into circulation and~~ arranged in the said body of said moving enclosure, ~~or else directly~~.

7. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said drying inert gas and said sweeping inert gas when used, ~~circulates~~ circulate in means of the fixed pipework type.

8. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, comprising:

- loading said waste into a compacting canister; said canister presenting on its bottom a check valve suitable for introducing the drying inert gas, and on its cover means suitable for evacuating said drying inert gas while limiting the entrainment of dust;
- positioning said loaded canister closed by its cover in the said cavity of a said moving enclosure; said cavity being provided in the said body of said moving enclosure and opening out in the a top portion thereof;
- docking said moving enclosure loaded with said waste-loaded canister, ~~itself loaded with said waste~~, to a said stationary docking station, said stationary docking station:
 - + ~~presenting a suitable configuration for said canister to be confined in a hermetically closed volume once said moving enclosure has docked; and~~
 - + being fitted with fixed pipework respectively for delivering said drying inert gas into said canister and for evacuating said drying inert gas from said canister ~~said drying inert gas~~; said fixed pipework for delivering said drying inert gas co-operating with ~~said~~ a check valve provided on the bottom of said canister via fixed pipework for circulating said drying inert gas

and provided in the body of said moving enclosure, and said fixed pipework for evacuating said drying inert gas co-operating directly with the said means for evacuating enabling said inert drying gas to be evacuated, which is provided on the cover of said gas canister;

- setting circulating said drying inert gas ~~into circulation~~ through said canister confined in said docked moving enclosure together with setting circulating said sweeping inert gas as delivered by fixed pipework of said docking ~~head into circulation~~ station via fixed pipework ~~for circulating said sweeping inert gas and~~ provided in the body of said moving enclosure, through the fraction of the hermetically closed volume that is not occupied by said canister, said sweeping inert gas being evacuated directly together with said drying inert gas via the fixed evacuation pipework of said docking ~~head~~ station.

9. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, the method being implemented with limitation of heat loss from said drying inert gas; said moving enclosure being thermally insulated ~~and/or said sweeping inert gas, if used, advantageously being used hot.~~

10. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said drying inert gas is selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, and argon, ~~or even~~ and air, and is delivered at a temperature lying in the range 180°C to 210°C.

11. (currently amended) The method according to claim 6, wherein said sweeping inert gas is selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, and argon, ~~or even~~ and air, ~~and is advantageously delivered hot, advantageously at a temperature lying in the range 80°C to 120°C.~~

12. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said metallic waste is radioactive waste, containing at least one of zirconium, and/or magnesium ~~and/or~~ alloys of zirconium and alloys of magnesium of these metals, in particular.

13. - 20 (canceled)

21. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of loading said waste into said canister is performed prior to the positioning of said canister in said cavity of said moving enclosure.

22. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of loading said waste into said canister is performed subsequent to the positioning of said canister in said cavity of said moving enclosure.

23. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said canister is cylindrical.

24. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein said canister is prismatic in shape.

25. (New) The method of claim 9, wherein said sweeping inert gas comprises hot sweeping inert gas.

26. (New) The method claim 11, wherein said sweeping inert gas is delivered hot.

27. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein said sweeping inert gas is delivered at a temperature in the range of from about 80° to about 120° C.